Culture: consideration of cultural aspects in the European Commnity action. Report

1996/2075(COS) - 30/01/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr José ESCUDERO (PPE, E) on the consideration of cultural aspects in European Community action, the European Parliament expressed its belief that the establishment of a genuine European cultural dimension would only be possible through the introduction of qualified majority voting and felt that the consideration of cultural aspects would in future be a requirement imposed on the European Community. According to Parliament, all Community acts and actions which have a cultural impact must include a clause ensuring they are compatible with the Union's cultural objectives and the Commission must establish a genuine cultural dialogue with NGOs and European cultural foundations. The report calls for the scope of Article 128 of the Treaty concerning culture to be widened. This should be the legal base, or one of the legal bases, for any legislative act with an essentially cultural. objective. In addition, this article should be amended to include a reference to the safeguarding and protection of European languages both inside and outside Europe. Parliament calls on the Commission to include cultural policy as one of the top priorities of the Union's Structural Funds and also asks it to submit in future 'integrated' cultural programmes (i.e. consistent with existing cultural actions and other Community instruments provided for in the TEU). The report reiterates Parliament's conviction that overall funding allocated to the cultural sector should be increased, but without integrating it within the framework of a single specific fund for Community cultural policy. Parliament also proposes that the Commission introduce a law to ensure that, in tenders for any public construction project (road infrastructure, other installations, etc.) which is co-financed by the European Union, 0.5 or 1% of the budget provided from European funds is allocated to the production of a work of art (painting, sculpture or one of the other fine arts) to adorn the project in question. At internal level, the report calls for greater importance to be given to the European dimension of education, television and film. With regard to education in particular, the Commission is asked to draw up a school text book on the history of Europe which, following approval by the Council, would be studied in all Member States (however, Parliament decided not to ask for such a textbook to be made a compulsory subject for study in all education syllabuses). The report also stresses the need for the Community to promote cultural measures outside the European Union in order to promote European cultural models by stressing the cultural heritage inspired by Europe. Finally, the Commission was asked to draw up a cultural policy which has as its main objective the elimination of illiteracy and the promotion of books, by encouraging the introduction of a zero VAT rating and fixed prices for books in homogeneous language areas.